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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9219
INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

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E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: SHUM AR

SUBJECT: (U) HIGH INTEREST CASE: DISAPPEARANCE OF DANIEL
BENDERSKY (603/78/9)

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify () In Part (X) In Full Decontrol

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

1. (U) MR. AND MRS. BENDERSKY CALLED ON AMBASSADOR CASTRO ON JANUARY 23, 1979 TO DISCUSS THE CONTINUING DISAPPEARANCE OF THEIR SON, DANIEL. THE FAMILY STATED THAT ALTHOUGH UNDER SECRETARY OF INTERIOR RUIZ PALACIOS HAD TAKEN A PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE CASE, HIS INQUIRIES REGARDING THEIR SON'S WHEREABOUTS TONOPERATIONAL UNITS REPORTEDLY HAD NOT BEEN RESPONDED TO. THE BENDERSKYS SAID THAT JUST AFTER THEIR SON'S "ARREST" ON SEPTEMBER 16, 1978, A FORMER SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE STATE SECRETARIAT FOR INTELLIGENCE (SIDE) INFORMED THEM THAT THEIR SON HAD BEEN FOUND NOT TO HAVE "CONNECTIONS WITH SUBVERSION" DURING HIS INTERROGATION AND WOULD REAPPEAR SHORTLY. NOW THAT FOUR MONTHS HAVE PASSED, THE FAMILY HAS BECOME DESPERATE. THE BENDERSKYS RECENTLY MET WITH GENERAL SANTIAGO OMAR RIVEROS, COMMANDER OF THE CAMPO DE MAYO, WHO TOLD THEM FLATLY "THAT THERE WERE NO CLANDESTINE PRISONERS BEING HELD BY THE ARMY AS THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY KILL ALL CAPTURED SUBVERSIVES."

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2. (U) AMBASSADOR CASTRO INFORMED THE BENERSKY FAMILY OF THE EMBASSY'S EFFORTS TO LOCATE THEIR SON THROUGH HIGH LEVEL REPRESENTATIONS AT THE MINISTRIES OF INTERIOR

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AND FOREIGN RELATIONS.

3. (U) DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONVEY ABOVE INFORMATION TO AAAS, ADL, AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY AND MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY WHO HAVE EACH EXPRESSED CONCERN IN BENDERSKY CASE.

4. [REDACTED] EMBASSY COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT GENERAL RIVEROS' DENIAL OF ARMY CLANDESTINE PRISONERS IS A MIS-STATEMENT. WE FIND HIS FLAT ASSERTION THAT ALL SUBVERSIVES ARE KILLED "BY POLICE" IN KEEPING WITH HIS REPUTATION AS ONE OF THE TOUGHEST OF THE MILITARY'S HARD-LINERS. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOME CLANDESTINE PRISONERS ARE BEING HELD NOT JUST BY THE ARMY, BUT ALSO WITHIN RIVEROS' COMMAND--THE CAMPO DE MAYO. MINISTER OF INTERIOR GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY EVEN ADMITTED TO A GROUP OF THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO LAST YEAR THAT "OVER A HUNDRED" SUBVERSIVES WERE BEING HELD IN THE CAMPO DE MAYO.
CASTRO

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